

**The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University**  
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# STATION WOSU

## The Voice of Ohio State University

By HOWARD NEIPP

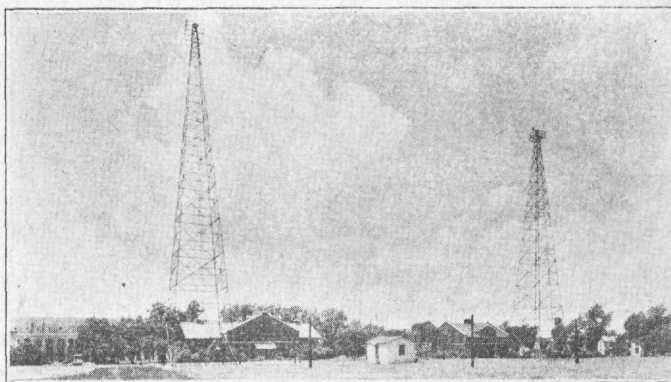
**B**ROADCASTING at Ohio State University officially began on June 3, 1922, when a regular broadcasting station license was issued to the University by the Department of Commerce, under the call letters WEO. This was the outgrowth of experimentation with radio and wireless by members of the faculty and students in the Electrical Engineering Department. As early as the year 1909 this department offered courses in this subject and maintained a radiotelegraph station which broadcast weather reports and other important information on an established schedule. This station played an important part in the communication system of the state during the 1913 flood.

The first regular broadcasting began sometime during 1921 under an experimental license, with a power of 100 watts on a wavelength of 425 meters. Soon after the regular broadcasting station license was issued, the power was increased to 500 watts, and the wavelength changed to 360 meters. In October of 1923 WEO qualified as a Class "B" station, which placed it on a preferred list of broadcasting stations from the point of equipment and service rendered. After the first year of regular broadcasting, a faculty Broadcasting Station Committee was appointed by the President of the University to direct the activities of the station. This committee was influential in creating further and more intensive interest in broadcasting at Ohio State University and was directly responsible for the reorganization and building of a new station during 1925.

### A Home of its Own

During the Summer of 1925 the radio transmitting station was moved from quarters in the Electrical Engineering Department Buildings to a separate structure erected beneath two new radio towers which still stand.

Several more changes were made in frequency during the next four years and the division of time on the air with different stations in the state continued. After the general reallocation, made by the Federal Radio Commission in 1928, WEO divided time with WKRC in Cincinnati on 550 kilocycles. Then on July 15, 1929, the frequency was changed to 570 kilocycles and time divided with WKBN in Youngstown, an arrangement which is still in force.



*The Antenna Towers*

Soon after the erection of a new transmitting station in 1925, the Broadcasting Station was separated from the Electrical Engineering Department and a new department created, known as the Broadcasting Station Department, and placed under the College of Engineering.

### Further Expansion

During the summer of 1928 two broadcasting studios, a control room, and offices were erected in the north end of the Communication Laboratory to accommodate the broadcasting station. These studios provided satisfactory accommodations for the comprehensive program representing the University. Improved equipment was provided in these studios for satisfactory transmission of programs, and during May, 1931, complete new speech input equipment was installed. When compliance with the regulations of the Federal Radio Commission for more strict frequency maintenance was ordered, a complete Western Electric 1000 watt radio transmitter was provided, and placed in operation in the station building. In March, 1933, the Federal Radio Commission granted an increase in power to 1000 watts for daytime operation. This increase further improved the reception of WEO throughout the state. It was at this point that WEO became WOSU.

In the earlier years, Professor R. A. Brown, of the Department of Electrical Engineering, directed the activities of the station. During the first year of regular operation, students were employed part time to carry out all

phases of the station's work. In the summer of 1923, however, a full time radio operator was employed. Shortly afterwards a program director was employed to manage the program activities, and announce the program. Use was also made of students in carrying on the program activities, and technical operation. Following the re-organization in 1925, Professor C. A. Wright of the Electrical Engineering Department became director of the station and other persons were employed. When Professor Wright left the University in 1927, Mr. R. C. Higgy became director, a position which he still holds.

## Programs

During the first year of operation the programs, which consisted of various types of experimental broadcasts, were under the direction of a student. Student groups and Columbus musicians were invited to broadcast and a few lectures were given through the WEAO microphone. In July, 1923, Mrs. F. G. Charles was employed as a full time program manager and the programs were expanded to include three daily periods on the air. These have gradually expanded until now the weekly schedule includes an average of thirty-eight hours of broadcast.

Throughout the history of the station special events, occurring on the University Campus and in Columbus, have been broadcast. These include Farm Week lectures, various short courses or schools, athletic events, lectures by renowned speakers, etc. In January, 1929, the State Department of Education inaugurated a series of school programs known as the Ohio School of the Air. The Farm Night program every Monday night was begun in the fall of 1926 with broadcasts of agricultural talks and information. Listening surveys have shown that close to 100,000 farm listeners regularly hear this program. The WOSU Players, a group of students interested in dramatics, also began the broadcasting of a weekly drama as early as 1927. Over four hundred plays, adapted for the radio, have been produced; many of them original productions inspired by the activities of this group.

In 1930 the broadcasting of French and Spanish lessons was undertaken and later Italian was added. From these has grown the present Ohio Emergency Radio Junior College, conducted by the Ohio State University in cooperation with the Ohio Emergency Schools Administration. Many of these courses are broadcast direct from the classrooms and have become a very vital part of Ohio's contribution to education by radio.

*Thus reads the history of the present WOSU—one of the pioneer broadcasting stations of the country. A later article will give a description of the present technical equipment and the new programs being offered by this station.*

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It just doesn't seem right. The coat and pants do all the work, and the vest gets all the gravy.